

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

**Chief John R. Batiste**

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Captain Jeff Devere  
Government and Media Relations  
(360) 753-5299 – office  
(360) 753-5469 – fax  
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

**Date:** January 10, 2006

**Contact:** Missing Children Clearinghouse Coordinator, Ms. Sue Miller

**Phone:** (360) 704-2404

## **“State Patrol’s Missing Children Clearinghouse 2005 Successes”**

On October 16, 2005, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) Missing Children Clearinghouse (MCC) celebrated its 20th year. Since 1985 the Clearinghouse has assisted in the recovery of 2,734 missing children. The Clearinghouse remains dedicated to assisting families and law enforcement in locating missing children in the state of Washington and throughout the country and world.

During calendar year 2005, the Clearinghouse assisted local law enforcement agencies and families in the recovery of 131 missing children. Many of these cases involved custodial interference, which involved a non-custodial parent illegally taking a child and fleeing. The Clearinghouse also assisted families and law enforcement in the recovery of 43 missing adults in 2005.

Due to the establishment of the Hope Act in the 1999 Legislative session, the Clearinghouse has been mandated to collect data on juveniles who have been reported missing to a law enforcement agency. During 2005, there were 22,223 missing juvenile reports filed with law enforcement which is a four (4) percent increase in comparison to the previous year. Approximately 90 percent of all missing juvenile reports are considered runaways. Since 1999, the Clearinghouse has received and tracked 127,442 reports of missing juveniles.

Captain Mark Couey praised Ms. Sue Miller and Ms. Mei-Ping Murray, the staff in the Clearinghouse, for their dedication and hard work that led to the Clearinghouse’s success in calendar year 2005. The Clearinghouse utilizes a multitude of databases and investigative techniques to locate missing children and individuals on the run from law enforcement.

If your child becomes missing, immediately file a report with the law enforcement agency who has jurisdiction where the child was last seen or contact the Washington State Patrol Missing Children Clearinghouse at 1-800-543-5678.

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